



Reading First Sustainability
Annotated Bibliography

Annotated Bibliography: Literature on Sustainability

The Afterschool Alliance. (2003). The road to sustainability. Washington, DC: Author.
Retrieved on Feb. 28, 2007 from <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/sustain.pdf>

This resource developed by the Afterschool Alliance is a workbook that assists schools and stakeholders in developing a sustainability plan. The workbook contains an overview that provides information on building collaboration, advocating for support, and finding funding. Throughout the workbook are worksheets that teams can use to guide them in the process of creating an individualized plan. The document also contains “voices from the field,” real-life snapshots from programs engaged in different aspects of sustainability planning. The last section of the workbook is devoted to designing a sustainability plan. Though the workbook is geared toward after-school programs, most of the information and tools are relevant to all education programs and provide a practical guide to sustainability planning.

American Youth Policy Forum and Center for Workforce Development. (2000). *Looking forward: School-to-work principles and strategies for sustainability*. Washington, DC: Author.

This report is a series of discussions with more than 50 people involved in the national school-to-work initiative created by the School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1994 (STWOA). It addresses the practical realities and challenges of continuing local School-to-Work programs and initiatives after the funding is gone. The interviews offered the following conclusions about sustaining programs: (1) There were some problems with a negative attitude toward the phrase "school-to-work" and the reality that reform takes time; (2) Some states have supported sustaining the program by infusing education reform with higher standards, providing tax credits for participating businesses, and making plans for continuing the programs after the federal law expires; (3) In other states, system-building efforts have faltered because of an inappropriate focus on short-term gains as opposed to sustained education reform; and (4) Few resources for continued funding of STWOA exist. The group developed 10 essential principles to improve the school experience, expand and improve work-based learning opportunities, and build and sustain public and private partnerships.

Baker, S., Gersten, R. & Chard, D. (2000). Factors enhancing sustained use of research-based instructional practices. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 33 (5), 445-457.

The authors discuss factors that enhance or discourage research-based instructional practice sustainability, while focusing specifically on the special education population. They review key findings from school-reform studies of the 1980s and explain their relevance to special education. The article highlights

significant findings from more recent studies and identifies unresolved issues relating to sustained use of effective teacher practices in the classroom. The authors cite the Rand Change Study which found that the amount of resources used to initiate an innovation did not directly affect to the innovations success. Most significantly, the study reported that the practices that educators felt helped them with their difficult-to-teach students proved most sustainable. The Guskey (1986) and Smylie (1988) studies were also referenced and the authors found that changes in teachers' beliefs and motivations often followed changes in practice rather than preceded them. The authors suggest that in order for practices to be sustained there needs to be a deepening of teachers' conceptual understanding of practices. Teachers need to reach practice mastery in an innovation in order to sustain it (Huberman & Miles, 1984). The article includes an appendix that lists questions reflection on practices and principles linked to supporting research-based practices over time.

- Baker, S., Gersten, R., Dimino, J., & Griffiths, R. (2004). The sustained use of research-based instructional practice: A case study of peer-assisted learning strategies in mathematics. *Remedial and Special Education*, Vol. 25, No.1, 5-24.

This article explores factors that enhance the sustainability of an innovation at the classroom level. The authors studied the factors influencing the sustained use of Peer Assisted Learning Strategies (PALS) in math in one elementary school. The authors examine whether teachers maintained their use of PALS after the research study ended. They also studied how PALS was used in each classroom and assessed teachers' perceptions of its utility, their understanding of its underlying principles, and their reasons for continuing use. The study showed that the PALS structure allowed for teachers to clearly see the impact the innovation was having on student achievement, which is an indicator of sustainability. The authors discuss the variables that influence sustained use of PALS, which were professional development and ongoing support, alignment of PALS with district and state mandates, teachers' conceptual understanding of the approach, teachers' retention of autonomy in teaching, and allocation of funds to support the innovation.

- Bonner, M., Koch, T. & Langmeyer, D. (2004). Organizational theory applied to school reform: A critical analysis. *School Psychology International*, 25(4): 455 - 471.

Organizational change in education, as manifested by school reform, is complex. In this article, the authors describe their experience with organizational change and analyze it using organizational change theories common in education. Their evaluation of the reform initiative yielded unexpected problems related to sustainability. The authors describe their experience with organizational change as viewed during a six-year school reform initiative. The authors analyze reform effort, using two frames of reference for organizational change common to education—Bolman and Deal (1997) and Chin and Benne (1994). They use Bolman and Deal's four organizational frames: structural orientation; political

orientation; human resource orientation; and, symbolic orientation. They also use Chin and Benne's three frames for general change strategies: empirical-rational strategies; normative-reductive strategies; and, power-coercive strategies. The authors conclude with a brief analysis from an "if we knew then what we know now" viewpoint, pointing to the complexity of education reform and the obvious challenge of maintaining a reform effort in the face of significant leadership changes.

- Brown, C.R. & Spangler, D. (2006). Creating sustainable reform: Five urban districts implement models for continuous improvement and lasting change. *The School Administrator*, 8 (63), 14-23.

This brief article features stories of five school districts that have implemented significant education reforms. School systems are notable for making change after change in their pursuit of educational excellence. When reforms fail, it is often because the school district has not established adequate systems that ensure sustainability. The article points out that typically, it takes at least four or five years for a change to become fully institutionalized and part of the system's culture. The advice given is for school system leaders to spend considerable time at the beginning of a reform initiative building an infrastructure that supports change and sustainability over the long term.

- Bryant, E. (2002). Sustaining comprehensive community initiatives: Key elements for success. Washington, D.C.: The Finance Project.

This financing strategy brief presents an eight-part sustainability framework to assist program developers and other stakeholders at the state and community levels in identifying the basic resources needed and address the strategic decisions necessary to sustain an initiative. The brief also contains real-world examples of some of the framework elements. The document explains each element in the sustainability framework in a reader-friendly format and gives concrete advice about how to sustain community initiatives.

- CCE Center for K-3 Reading and Behavior Intervention Models, Wisconsin Center for Education Research, School of Education, University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI. *Measuring and evaluating the sustainability changes: an outline of key variables*. (n.d.). Retrieved October 23, 2006, from http://www.wcer.wisc.edu/cce/documents/SustainOutline_101003.pdf

Researchers at the CCE Center for K-3 Reading and Behavior Intervention Models reviewed Florian's (2001) cross-site analysis of variables affecting the sustainability of reform efforts. They identified the following five factors as critical to ensuring long-term sustainability: (1) *Ongoing Engagement and Development of Human Capacities*, (2) *School and District Culture/Climate*, (3) *Structures of Education System*, (4) *School and District Leadership*, and (5) *Political Context*. The authors' review of the literature led them to suggest that an additional factor, (6) *Innovation/Reform Attributes*, also affects long-term

sustainability. In this analysis the reviewers describe the five factors identified by Florian (2001), while extending the initial description of critical variables.

Century, J.R. & Levy, A. J. (2004). Bringing theory of and research on sustainability to practice: Giving school improvement a “bottom line.” Paper delivered for the Student Coalition for Action in Literacy Education (SCALE) think tank, November, 2003.

The authors of this research report apply their understanding of sustainability in education reform, drawn from years of experience with the Research for Sustainability of Reform (RSR) Project, to the issue of sustainability of the Student Coalition for Action in Literacy Education (SCALE) Programs. The report gives a definition of sustainability that distinguishes between program maintenance and sustainability: *The ability of a program to maintain its core beliefs and values and use them to guide program adaptations to changes and pressures over time.* The report identifies common themes and recurring issues relevant to sustainability. Within the broader study of sustainability, the research paid particular attention to system-wide approaches to science education reform, as well as to the role that external funds can play in initiating reforms that are sustained. The goal of the RSR study was to identify and document factors in school systems that contribute to sustained educational change in science education. The purpose was to provide districts now engaged in improving their science education programs (or districts that are considering doing so in the future) with information to help them more strategically and effectively build an infrastructure for long-term improvement.

Century, J.R. & Levy, A. J. (2002). Sustaining your reform: Five lessons from research. *Benchmarks: The Quarterly Newsletter of the National Clearinghouse for Comprehensive School Reform*, 3(3), 1-7.

In this article the authors offer a summary of some of their research findings on sustaining education reform drawn from their work on the Researching the Sustainability of Reform (RSR) project. In this project the authors studied nine school districts that had implemented hands-on science programs over 10 to 30 year spans. The authors identify themes and lessons learned drawn from the characteristics, approaches and outcomes that were common among the nine programs studied. They include broad findings, from the meaning of sustainability and the contexts and conditions that affect it to the more specific factors that play a direct role in the sustainability of a particular reform.

Coburn, C. (2003). Rethinking scale: Moving beyond numbers to deep and lasting change. *Educational Researcher*, Vol. 32, No. 6, 3-12.

Coburn synthesizes the research on scale and reform implementation in order to create a conceptualization of scale that includes four interrelated dimensions: depth, sustainability, spread, and shift in reform ownership. The article offers implications for reform strategy based on the scale conceptualization. When

discussing sustainability, the author suggests how successful schools develop depth of teacher knowledge, use the presence of supportive professional development/community of colleagues to provide continuous opportunities for learning, strong and supportive leadership, connections with other schools or teachers engaged in similar reform, and alignment between the district policy context and the reform.

- Datnow, A. (2005). The sustainability of comprehensive school reform models in changing district and state contexts. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, Vol. 41, No. 1, 121-153.

This article addresses the sustainability of Comprehensive School Reform (CSR) models in the face of turbulent district and state contexts. It draws on qualitative data gathered in a longitudinal case study of six CSR models implemented in 13 schools in one urban district. After 3 years, reform efforts ceased in 6 of the 13 schools studied; two other schools were still implementing reforms, but at very low levels. Only 5 of the 13 schools continued to implement their CSR models with moderate to high levels of intensity. Findings show that changing district and state contexts affected the sustainability of CSR models in schools differently depending on each school's strategy for dealing with the changes, as well as local conditions, experiences with reform, and capacity. Lasting reforms were those which assisted educators in meeting district and state requirements and placed less demand on the LEA and its resources. The author's final implication is that high-stakes accountability demands can cause schools to abandon reform strategies, especially in schools with limited capacity.

- Denton, C. & Vaughn, S. (2003). Bringing research-based practice in reading intervention to scale. *Learning Disabilities Research and Practice*, 18 (3), 201-211.

This article discusses high-quality classroom reading instruction and preparation of practitioners to effectively implement validated reading interventions. The authors suggest that to sustain practices, there needs to be (1) on-going mentoring and assistance, time, resources and technical support to build competence, (2) empowered teachers to take ownership and responsibility for the process of school change, (3) practices that have a scope that is neither too vague nor too narrow and reflects the realities of implementation in today's schools, and (4) strong leadership support. The article provides an analysis of factors related to bringing research-validated practices to scale, which the authors say is essential for implementation of Response-to-Intervention models in special education. The key components of an effective reading program mentioned are differentiated instruction, explicit instruction, and an effective teacher. The obstacles and challenges the authors identify are lack of information about effective instructional practices and how to implement them and disbelief by some educators that research-based practices are associated with improved outcomes for their students.

Education Development Center. (2002). When school reform lasts: Creating the conditions for long-term change. *Mosaic*, 2-18.

This report focuses on defining sustainability, using data to guide decision-making, improving opportunities for teacher learning, and creating partnerships to support local change initiatives. The report is based on interviews with four researchers conducting work on program sustainability: Century, Matsumoto, Lord, and Honey. In defining sustainability, Century identifies three phases of a program—the establishment phase, the maturation phase, and the evolution phase—concluding that a program has to evolve to sustain. Matsumoto uses the term “open architecture” to describe the process of preserving an initiative during staff turnover, shifting priorities, etc., suggesting that there needs to be an accountability system established that is based on collecting and analyzing data in order to track and match student outcomes to the initiative’s core beliefs. Lord discusses the need to foster teacher learning by having a model that incorporates coaching, demonstration and team teaching. Honey explains the importance of collaboration between researchers and practitioners for program sustainability and that localization of reform models is critical for sustainability.

Fixen, D., Naoom, S. et al. (2005). *Implementation research: A synthesis of the literature*. Tampa, FL: University of South Florida, The National Implementation Research Network.

This literature synthesis describes the results of a review of implementation research. When explaining the stages of implementation, the authors summarize the findings of Winter & Szulanski (2001) who noted that adaptations made after a model has been implemented with fidelity were more successful than modifications made before full implementation. Implementations administered with high fidelity were those that contained staff training, coaching, supervision, and the consistent use of data to inform the overall process. The authors also reiterate how the school, along with the community, must be aware of shifting priorities and influences and adjust without losing the functional components of the evidence-based program. In summary of the organizational factors, Fixen *et al.* conclude that when strong core implementation components are well-supported by strong organizational structures, the desired outcomes of sustaining high fidelity practices can be achieved. Additional information from the National Implementation Research Network can be found at: <http://nirn.fmhi.usf.edu>

Florian, J. (2000). *Sustaining educational reform: Influential factors*. Aurora, CO: Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning.

This report is a study of districts that had initiated a stated-sponsored reform effort, the “Enhancement Initiative,” 10 years prior to the 1990-1994 investigation. The intent was to investigate the sustainability of reform initiatives centered in research-based practices. The report synthesizes some of the current sustainability research and suggests the factors contributing to sustained educational change evident in two or more research studies. The factors are: (1)

methods or practices that teachers experienced as effective in accomplishing school goals; (2) school principals who effectively promoted, supported, and managed change; (3) political support for new practices from district and, if possible, state levels; and (4) active recruitment of highly qualified faculty.

Foorman, B.R. & Moats, L.C. (2004). Conditions for sustaining research-based practices in early reading instruction. *Remedial and Special Education*, 25 (1), 51-60.

This article addresses both reading instruction and its sustainability. It proposes a list of critical conditions for sustaining practices and discusses the obstacles and challenges of sustainability. Moats profiles two cohorts from the Houston and District of Columbia Public Schools that she tracked for four years in a study called the Houston-DC Project. She concludes that sustainability requires strong instructional leaders, and discusses challenges, such as how teacher preparation and professional development programs are slow to promote research-based reading practices. Another obstacle mentioned is the “wait to fail” policy governing special education eligibility.

Fullan, M. (2002). The change leader. *Educational Leadership*. 59, 16-20.

The author looks at the key role that effective school leaders play in large-scale, sustainable education reform. He argues that educators have believed that principals must be instructional leaders if they are to be the effective leaders needed for sustained innovation. At the heart of school capacity must be principals focused on the development of teachers' knowledge and skills, professional community, program coherence, and technical resources. The author also examines the role of the leader in sustaining change. He points out the need to develop and support “Cultural Change Principals,” by focusing our attention on sustainability—the likelihood that the overall system can regenerate itself toward improvement. He identifies four key components of sustainability: developing the social environment, learning in context, cultivating leaders at many levels (and ensuring leadership succession), and enhancing the teaching profession.

Fullan, M. (2002). The role of leadership in the promotion of knowledge management in schools. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, Vol. 8, No. 3 / 4, 409-419.

The author's main objective in this article is to discuss the ideas of knowledge sharing and knowledge building, and their connection to effective teaching practices. He also provides descriptions of what successful knowledge sharing looks like. The article presents the role of the principal as that of leader in a culture of change and in sustainability. The article provides specific information on two aspects important to sustainability: depth of teacher knowledge and leadership.

- Giles, C. & Hargreaves, A. (2006). The sustainability of innovative schools as learning organizations and professional learning communities during standardized reform. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, Vol. 42, No. 1, 124-156.

This article considers whether innovative schools can sustain their initial promise of success, despite what the authors describe as the “attrition of change,” which encompasses pressure and envy within a district, profession, and community; and the historically-specific and recent pressure of standardized reform. The article examines the impact of these influences on three innovative high schools and their sustainability over time.

- Gill, B., Dembosky, J.W. & Caulkins, J.P. (2002). A “noble bet” in early care and education. Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation.

This extensive report examines the ambitious efforts of the Early Childhood Initiative (ECI) of Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, to provide high-quality early care and education (ECE) services to at-risk children. ECI aimed to become financially sustainable over the long term, when the initial infusion of dollars from foundations and private donors was exhausted. The report presents a critical analysis of ECI’s business plan and operations, detailing a number of reasons why the initiative fell short of its goals. Finally, since the report aims to be more than a postmortem analysis, it offers lessons for the future, alternative models for ECE initiatives, and public-policy implications. This report should have relevance not only for ECI’s stakeholders, but also for funders, program developers, and policymakers around the country who are working on large-scale initiatives related to a variety of education and social service reforms. Although the lessons learned are most applicable to early childhood programs, many of the recommendations can be valuable advice for administrators developing and sustaining school-based reading programs.

- Hamann, E. T., & Meltzer, J. (2005). Multi-party mobilization for adolescent literacy in a rural area: A case study of policy development and collaboration. Providence, RI: Education Alliance at Brown University.

This case study describes the multi-party mobilization that led to the creation and implementation of an adolescent literacy project and explains the link between this rural effort and the change in state-level reform efforts. The project promoted a new focus on adolescent literacy across content areas, as a lever for school improvement in five participating high schools in one rural county. Because of the participating schools’ rural isolation, limited resources, lack of nearby expertise, and learned skepticism towards externally initiated change efforts, the project also required the mobilization of multiple partners, each of whom could contribute resources, expertise, credibility, and/or access, which made the project more viable and sustainable. The case study provides a detailed analysis of how key players at local and state levels of the education system can be effectively engaged in developing a sustainable education reform. This case study has some useful insights for sustainability from the perspective of a parallel literacy topic—

adolescent literacy. It clearly makes the point that a local or state education reform effort can take on new (and sustainable) meaning as it mingles and merges with concurrent reform efforts.

Hargreaves, A. & Fink, D. (2003). The seven principles of sustainable leadership. *Educational Leadership*, Vol. 61, No. 7, 1-12.

This article identifies two ways leadership can be sustained in school-based settings. The authors identify seven principles for sustaining leadership: (1) creating and preserving sustained learning, (2) securing success over time, (3) sustaining the leadership of others, (4) addressing issues of social justice, (5) developing rather than depleting human and material resources, (6) developing environmental diversity and capacity, and (7) undertaking activist engagement with the environment.

Hargreaves, A. & Fink, D. (2003). Sustaining leadership. *Phi Delta Kappan*, Vol. 84 No. 9, 693-700.

The authors explore the crucial role school leaders play in supporting and sustaining aspects of teaching and learning by drawing on their five-year study from six high schools. The study looks at leadership over time in eight high schools. They extend the definition of sustainability to include “developing initiatives without comprising the development of other initiatives now and in the near future.” The authors identify three aspects of sustainable leadership: (1) leading learning-focus on student learning first, while others’ learning supports student learning; (2) distributed leadership/collaboration and connections between leaders; and (3) leadership succession-recognizing that leadership change can pose a threat to sustainability efforts. The authors suggest that planned succession is often unjustly missing when discussing sustainability improvement.

Hargreaves, A. & Goodson, I. (2006). Educational change over time? The sustainability and nonsustainability of three decades of secondary school change and continuity. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 42: 3-41.

This article presents the conceptual framework, methodological design, and key research findings from a Spencer Foundation-funded project of long-term educational change over time. Based on more than 200 interviews, supplementary observations, and extensive archival data, it examines perceptions and experiences of educational change in eight high schools in the United States and Canada among teachers and administrators who worked in the schools in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. The authors identify the following eight key principles of sustainable improvement: (1) Sustainable improvement ultimately creates and preserves sustaining learning; (2) Sustainable school improvement secures enduring changes that last; (3) Sustainable improvement is about systems thinking and social justice; (4) Sustainable change is developed and maintained on the basis of existing and achievable resources; (5) Sustainable change sustains teachers’ and leaders’ emotional and intellectual selves; (6) Sustainable change is

a shared responsibility; (7) Sustainable change in politically challenging environments requires activist engagement to secure outside advocacy and support; and (8) Sustainable change develops environmental diversity and capacity. The article also provides a very thorough and clear literature review on the sustainability of educational change.

Horner, R. & Sugai, G. (2006). Policy brief: Scaling up effective educational innovations. Washington, DC: US Department of Education.

This policy brief summarizes the variables that affect large scale implementation of evidence-based practices in education. The authors discuss the core features of scalable innovations: the foundations for scalability, implementation for capacity building, and phases of implementation. When addressing sustainability, the authors state that an innovation must have systematic procedures for ensuring continuous regeneration and must have the capacity to continuously transfer skills and practices to new staff. They conclude by indicating that successfully scaled innovations must have leadership structures that emphasize capacity building.

Jerald, C. (2005). More than maintenance: Sustaining improvements over the long run. *Policy Brief*. The Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement. Washington, D.C.

This policy brief is a summary of sustaining improvement, drawn from the literature on sustaining education reforms as well as the literature examining the practices of successful businesses that have endured and thrived. The author organizes his findings into three key stages of sustaining improvement—maintaining, extending and adapting—and uses these concepts to organize examples drawn from the literature review. The brief provides five strategies that can help schools sustain improvement, again, with examples drawn from the literature.

Johnson, K., Hays C., Center, H., & Daley, C. (2004). Building capacity and sustainable prevention innovations: a sustainability planning model. *Evaluation and Program Planning*, 27, 135–149.

Although focused on prevention programs, this article presents an informed definition of sustainability and an associated planning model for sustaining innovations (pertinent to both infrastructure and interventions) within organizational, community, and state systems. The planning model stems from a systematic review of the literature and from concepts derived from a series of ‘think tanks’ made up of key substance abuse prevention professionals. The model assumes a five-step process (i.e., assessment, development, implementation, evaluation, and reassessment/modification) and addresses factors known to inhibit efforts to sustain an innovation. One set of factors concerns the capacity of prevention systems to support sustainable innovations. The other pertains to the extent to which a particular innovation is sustainable. A sustainability action strategy is presented, which includes goals with

corresponding sets of objectives, actions, and results to determine the extent of readiness to sustain an innovation. Sustainability tools to assist in implementing the planning model are illustrated, and next steps for the model are discussed.

- Klingner, J., Vaughn, S. Hughes, M. & Arguelles, M. (1999). Sustaining research-based practices in reading: A 3-year follow-up. *Remedial and Special Education*.

This study examines the extent to which the reading instructional practices learned by a cohort of teachers who participated in an intensive, year-long professional development experience have been sustained or modified over time. Teachers were observed and interviewed three years later. All teachers except for one sustained one or more of the three practices at a high rate. The practices examined were partner reading, collaborative strategic reading, and making words. This study paid particular attention to the ways in which teachers adjusted research-based instructional practices to fit their needs. The factors that the teachers stated as facilitating sustained use of the practices were: having a support network, administrative backing, student benefits, students' acceptance of an instructional practice; being able to adapt or modify a practice; and having materials already prepared or available. Factors that impeded sustained use of practices were: high-stakes achievement testing, emphasis on content coverage, time constraints, mismatch between teaching style/personality and practice, forgetting portions (or all) of the practice, and not having an in-depth understanding of a practice.

- Knight, N. (2005). The contested notion of sustainability: Possibility or pipe dream for numeracy reforms in New Zealand. In P. Clarkson, A. Dowton, D. Gronn, M. Horne, A. McDonough, R. Pierce & A. Roche (Eds.), *Building connections: Research, theory and practice, Proceedings of the Annual Conference of the Mathematics Education Research Group of Australasia* (467–474), Melbourne: MERGA.

This paper provides a critique of the notion of sustainability, situating the analysis in the context of recent developments in mathematics education in New Zealand. It examines how the term *sustainability* is used, both internationally in the literature on curriculum reform, and nationally in New Zealand with reference to the Numeracy Development Project. The author argues that the complexity and multi-dimensionality of the term is underestimated, and it appears to have become an inappropriate slogan for the next stage of numeracy development in New Zealand. The author probes the definition of sustainability and looks at the issues of measuring sustainability, distinguishing between those who favor a process measured by improved practices (teacher knowledge, pedagogical practice) and sustainability measured in outcomes, (specifically raised student achievement). The author uses the three key dimensions of sustainable change in schools, as developed by Earl, Watson and Torrance (2002) to organize a recommendation for sustaining the Numeracy Development Project in New Zealand.

McLaughlin, M. (1990). "The RAND change agent study revisited: Macro perspectives and micro realities," *Educational Researcher*, Vol. 19, No. 9.

In this study researchers revisited a study from 1989, which had concluded that so-called "external change agents" were not successful in promoting lasting innovations in schools precisely because they were outsiders. The original study looked at four federal programs from the late 1960s and early 70s. In this revisiting of the original study's conclusions, the researchers revised their view: Outside change agents could be effective in local efforts to improve practice, they found, provided such consultants adapted their programs to local conditions and modified their advice to "suit the local setting"--something the consultants in the earlier study had failed to do. More broadly stated, this study concludes that local factors, being different in every situation, have more significance for outcomes than do such policy features as technology, program design, funding levels, or governance requirements. "The local expertise, organizational routines, and resources available to support planned-change efforts generate fundamental differences in the ability of practitioners to plan, execute, or sustain an innovative effort."

Moffet, C. (2000). Sustaining change: The answers are blowing in the wind. *Education Leadership*, 57 (7), 35-38.

The author looks to the research on sustainability to provide educators and policy makers with guidelines for sustaining change, stating that reform sustainability requires (1) developing a reform-support infrastructure that reorganizes district policies, practices, communication mechanisms, support structures, norms and incentives, while redeploying district resources, (2) nurturing professional communities by making the initiative have an impact on school cultural norms, (3) reducing personnel turnover, and (4) using facilitators to build internal capacity. The author shares reminders regarding professional development: provide abundant staff development, balance pressure with support, provide adult learning time, and reduce fragmentation and overload. The author argues that student achievement is enhanced most by a sense of professional community within a school.

National Center for Reading First Technical Assistance. (2005). An introductory guide for Reading First coaches. Chapter 8: Sustaining reading improvement. Austin, TX: Author.

This chapter discusses how coaches play a key role in sustaining reading improvement by promoting on-going professional development, sharing their knowledge and expertise, and gradually transferring the lead to teachers as they demonstrate proficiency and improve student achievement. This narrative mentions how sustaining effective reading instruction involves assessment-driven differentiated instruction, instruction that is based on scientifically-based reading research, standards and accountability, professional development, and administrative support. The practice activity (#1) included in this chapter called

Next Steps: Sustainability of Reading Improvement could be used as a reflection sheet for Reading First educators to identify gaps in the early stages of developing a sustainability plan.

Northeast and Islands Regional Educational Laboratory. (2000). What it takes: 10 capacities for initiating and sustaining school improvement.

This document is a guidebook for school staff to reflect on their current capacities to implement and sustain a reform. The guidebook describes each of the ten critical capacities and presents snapshots from schools that exemplify each capacity. Each capacity is grouped into one of three thematic sets: foundational, organizational, and learning/resource management. The ten capacities are: (1) enhancing energy flow among staff, (2) creating collective purpose, (3) strengthening the evolving culture, (4) teaming, (5) creating structures for decentralized decision making, (6) making structural changes, (7) piloting, (8) creating and maintaining a learning ethic, and (9) bringing in information and skills (10) orchestrating resources and managing distractions. Reflection questions are posed after each capacity for school team discussion.

O'Neil, J. (2000). Fads and Fireflies: The Difficulties of Sustaining Change. *Educational Leadership*, 57 (7), 6-9.

In this interview noted researcher Larry Cuban reflects on why education reforms are proposed and what happens when they are brought to the complex setting of schools. He suggests that the innovations that have the best chance of sustaining are those that have constituencies that grow around them. Reforms that dissolve are those that are usually proposed by policymakers or officials who have little knowledge about teaching and learning in a classroom context. Cuban refers to his previous work when making the distinction between policy talk, policy action, and policy implementation in the context of reform efforts. He concludes by stating that schools are continually adapting to external pressures, and therefore maintain old practices as they invent new ones. Cuban's comments highlight many of the characteristics that other research has identified to be significant in sustaining or failing reform initiatives.

Owston, R. D. (2004). Contextual factors that sustain innovative pedagogical practice using technology: An international study. A paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Diego, CA.

This study examines school and classroom contexts in which pedagogical innovations employing technology were successfully sustained. The study argues that pedagogical innovation—whether involving technology or not—is shaped by a complex interaction of the innovation with contextual factors, such as school and district policy, leadership, cultural norms and values, teacher attitudes and skills, and student characteristics. Data were obtained from 59 cases drawn from the Second Information Technology in Education Study, a project that examined 174 cases of innovative pedagogical practice in schools in 28 countries. An

explanatory model of sustainability was derived from a qualitative analysis of the cases using grounded theory techniques. Essential conditions for the sustainability of classroom innovation were teacher and student support of the innovation, teacher perceived value of the innovation, teacher professional development, and principal approval. Contributing factors for sustainability were supportive plans and policies, funding, innovation champions, and both internal and external recognition and support.

Southwest Education Development Laboratory. (1994). Schools as Learning Communities. Vol. 4 No. 1. Retrieved on February 28, 2007, from <http://www.sedl.org/change/issues/issues41.html>

Learning community has become a popularly used term in educational literature, particularly with regard to school reform. The idea of a learning community is an adaptation of the concept of learning organizations, as described by Senge (1990). This document profiles one school's four principals over time and each of the distinct ways in which he/she enhanced the school's learning community. The document highlights planned leadership succession, distributed leadership, collaborative learning, planning and professional development, and building a common vision. The author emphasizes the specific elements within the ideas of culture and leadership as they pertain to sustainability, and also describes what successful school communities look like.

Slavin, R. & Madden, N. (1996). Built to last: Long-term maintenance of Success for All. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association.

This paper discusses the components of the Success for All reading program and describes the program elements that are intended to increase maintenance over time. Slavin presents the program characteristics affecting dissemination and maintenance, which are: having building facilitators, providing for materials and school organization, having school wide buy-in, funding from reliable sources, national and local support networks, having standards of practice, and continuing research and development related to Success for All. Many of the characteristics Slavin describes are elements that have been determined through research to have an effect on sustaining an innovation on the local level. This paper reinforces the importance of having these elements present when formulating a plan for sustaining an innovation in districts and schools.

Steiner, L. (2000). A review of the research literature on scaling up in education: The problem of scaling-up in education. Chicago, IL: North Central Regional Educational Laboratory.

This literature review focuses on a parallel topic to sustainability—scaling up educational reforms. It begins with a quote from Richard Elmore (1997) that underscores the premise that scaling up is inherently problematic:

In instructional practice, education has a tradition of cottage industry innovation. Individual practitioners and researchers develop new practices, often based on sophisticated, empirically grounded ideas, and test them in selected settings. . . . These cottage industry innovations in instructional practice seldom apply to schools other than the ones in which they are developed and tested, and, if they do, they are often adopted in an eviscerated, watered-down form that bears little resemblance to the original.

The article categorizes the challenges of scaling up, both internally and externally, as well as the elements of successful scale up—program design, buy-in at the school level, support, leadership, quality assurance, and building constituencies for change. The author also lays out specific implications for policymakers at all levels, innovators, and school leaders.

Taylor, J. (2005). *Sustainability: Examining the survival of schools' comprehensive school reform efforts*. Paper prepared for the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Montreal, Canada.

This paper examines a sample of 395 urban, disadvantaged, low-achieving elementary and middle-schools using CSR in 2001-2002, to determine how well CSR models were sustained. One third of the CSR schools discontinued their relationship with their model developers by the end of 2003-2004. The factors that would make schools more likely to sustain a CSR effort are (1) high local school capacity, (2) a supportive political context, (3) sufficient funding, (4) positive student outcomes, (5) fit or alignment between the reform design and the school, (6) leadership stability, (7) faculty retention, (8) faculty commitment, (9) practical concrete reform specifications that are structured into the daily life of the school, (10) sustained professional development, and (11) protection from competing reforms. Of the interrelated set of sustainability factors, *faculty retention* and *providing professional development support* appear to be the most significant. The author concludes that in many schools with profiles similar to the sample schools, the influence of CSR models can live beyond the formal discontinuation of the reform relationship. This paper presents concrete, research-based information regarding CSR sustainability in school populations, along with questions for further research.

UCLA Center for Mental Health in Schools. (2000). *Sustaining school-community partnerships to enhance outcomes for children and youth: A guidebook and tool kit*. Los Angeles, CA: author.

This guidebook is a resource for schools and communities who are concerned with sustaining initiatives in health education. The focus of this document is on sustaining valued functions and collaborations, suggesting that sustainability is about making systemic changes. The guidebook also discusses developing a comprehensive, multifaceted, and integrated approach to the initiative vision that allows for sustainability. The material provides well-developed examples of tools

to assist in sustainability planning and staff reflection. Though focused on health education, the information in the documents discusses the general issues of capacity building, collaboration, and initiative evaluation in preparation for sustainability.

Vaughn, S., Klingner, J. & Hughes, M. (2000). Sustainability of research-based practices. *Exceptional Children*. 66, (2), 163-171.

The authors discuss factors for sustainability, including the ability of teachers to give input along with way; and a feeling of collaboration, sensitivity, and responsiveness between the researcher and the practitioner. The authors present issues related to the extent to which sustainability can reasonably be expected over time. Also discussed are the two prevailing beliefs on why research-based practices are not being sustained—the “blame the teacher” explanation and the “blame the researcher” explanation. This article makes comparisons and shows differences between implementing and sustaining research-based practices in medicine and education. The authors conclude that because the implementation of research-based practices is often more difficult in education, and the outcomes less obvious, it would make sense to predict very low levels of fidelity and sustainability. The authors conclude that just because a practice is research-based and related to valuable outcomes is not sufficient reason alone to maintain a high rate of implementation.

Weiss, H., Coffman, J. & Bohan-Baker, M. (2002). Evaluation's role in supporting initiative sustainability. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Family Research Project.

This paper begins by stating a common complaint about foundation-funded initiatives: that foundations too often fail to do enough, early enough, to ensure sustainability. The paper goes on to offer ideas for the role that evaluation can play in helping ensure that a discussion about sustainability is started early enough to make a difference and maintained throughout an initiative. It proposes that evaluation can support initiative sustainability by:

- 1) **Supporting sustainability through strategy** – Evaluators and evaluation can advise and facilitate initiative strategy development. In doing this, evaluators can help to build in a direct and deliberate focus on sustainability as foundations contemplate the formation of the initiative’s strategy, engage in strategic planning, and manage the initiative’s implementation.
- 2) **Supporting sustainability with evaluation** – Evaluation practice should treat sustainability as an outcome, track its progress, and communicate regular information that can be used to ensure sustainability is on course, and if it is *not*, to point to opportunities for midcourse corrections. Sustainability is not just about continuous

funding, however, and it can be operationalized and tracked in a number of ways.

The paper focuses heavily on the issues that arise from grantees receiving and sustaining foundation support, but it also offers detailed suggestions on how evaluators and evaluation can help program leaders build sustainability strategies into their program implementation at key points.



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